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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/603,402	06/24/2003	Michael S. Denny	60027.0192US01/BS # 02375	4851
39262 7590 04/23/2008 MERCHANT & GOULD BELL SOUTH CORPORATION P.O. BOX 2903 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402				
EXAMINER				
ADDY, THUAN KNOWLIN				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2614				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
04/23/2008		PAPER		

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/603,402

Applicant(s)

DENNY ET AL.

Examiner

THJUAN K. ADDY

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 February 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

1. Applicant's amendment filed on February 18, 2008 has been entered. Claims 1, 18, 21, 29, 32, and 36 have been amended. No claims have been cancelled. No claims have been added. Claims 1-37 are still pending in this application, with claims 1, 18, 21, 29, 32, and 36 being independent.
2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 02/18/2008 has been entered.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Martin (US 6,931,114).
4. In regards to claims 1, 21, 32, and 36, Martin discloses a method, telecommunications switching point, and telecommunications bridging station of and for creating area party lines (e.g., chat rooms) (See Abstract), comprising: receiving a first telephone call at a first local call station directly over a first telecommunication link, the first telephone call providing an area party line indication (e.g., the caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW); receiving a second telephone call at the first local call station directly over a second telecommunications link, the second telephone call providing the area party line indication (e.g., another caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW); and in response to receiving the area party line indication of the first telephone call and the second telephone call, bridging the first telephone call to the second telephone call at the first local call station to establish a first area party line (e.g., Pop Music chat room) between the first telephone call and the second telephone call, wherein the first local call station is configured to accommodate further bridging of calls received subsequent to the first

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telephone call and the second telephone call to the first area party line established between the first telephone call and second telephone call (See col. 1-2 lines 61-11 and col. 4 lines 25-46); receiving a reassignment indication from a caller (e.g., the caller presses one or more buttons, such as "1", on the keypad to enter a different chat room) in the first area party line; in response to receiving the reassignment indication from the caller in the first area party line, bridging the caller from the first area party line to a second area party line (e.g., Rock Music chat room) (See col. 4 lines 47-55 and Claim 18).

5. In regards to claims 2 and 22, Martin discloses the method, wherein the first telephone call and the second telephone call are landline calls, the first telecommunication link and the second telecommunication line are landlines, and the first local call station comprises a landline SSP (See Fig. 1 and SSP 51) (See col. 3 lines 29-33).

6. In regards to claims 3 and 23, Martin discloses the method, wherein the first telephone call and the second telephone call are wireless telephone calls, the first telecommunication link and the second telecommunication link are wireless links, and the first local call station comprises a wireless telephone base station (See Fig. 1 and base stations 10 and 20) (See col. 3 lines 23-28 and col. 3 lines 30-33).

7. In regards to claims 4 and 24, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: receiving a third telephone call at a second local call station over a third telecommunication link, the third telephone call providing the area party line indication for the first local call station; transferring the third telephone call from the second local

call station to the first local call station; receiving the third telephone call transferred from the second local call station at the first local call station; and in response to receiving the third telephone call with the area party line indication, bridging the third telephone call with the first telephone call and the second telephone call to further establish the area party line between the first telephone call, the second telephone call, and the third telephone call (See col. 1-2 lines 61-7).

8. In regards to claims 5, 6, 19, 25, 26, 30, and 33, Martin discloses the method and telecommunications switching point, wherein the first and second telephone calls are landline calls over landline telecommunication links to the first local call station, wherein the local call station is a landline SSP, and wherein the third telephone call is a wireless telephone call and the second local call station is a base station, and wherein transferring the third telephone call comprises directing the wireless telephone call from the base station to the landline SSP (See Fig. 1 and col. 3 lines 23-33).

9. In regards to claims 7 and 27, Martin discloses the method, wherein the first and second telephone calls are landline calls over landline telecommunication links to the first local call station, wherein the first local call station is a first landline SSP, and wherein the third telephone call is a landline telephone call and the second local call station is a second landline SSP, and wherein transferring the third telephone call comprises directing the landline telephone call from the second landline SSP over the public switched telephone network to the first landline SSP based on the indication of the area party line of the first landline SSP provided by the third telephone call (See col. 3 lines 29-33).

10. In regards to claims 8, 20, 28, and 31, Martin discloses the method, wherein directing the landline telephone call from the second landline SSP over the public switched telephone network comprises directing the landline telephone call from the second landline SSP over a long distance network to the public switched telephone network of the first landline SSP (See Fig. 1, Fig. 4, and col. 3 lines 29-33).

11. In regards to claim 9, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: detecting whether the first local call station has reached a maximum area party line capacity; and when the first local call station has reached a maximum area party line capacity, then providing a message to the next incoming call with an area party line indication (See col. 2 lines 4-22 and col. 4 lines 17-46).

12. In regards to claims 10 and 15, Martin discloses the method, wherein the message includes an option to be called back to an area party line when available, the method further comprising: receiving a selection of the option and storing a number for the incoming call that has provided the selection; detecting when capacity at the first local call station can accommodate an incoming call and then calling the line identified by the number; and upon receiving an answer to the call to the line, bridging the line into the area party line (See col. 2 lines 4-22 and col. 4 lines 17-46).

13. In regards to claims 11 and 12, Martin discloses the method, further comprising upon detecting that the wireless telephone call has switched to a different base station, providing an option to the wireless telephone call to switch to a different area party line, and wherein switching the wireless call to a different landline SSP occurs only when the wireless telephone call selects that option to switch (See col. 4 lines 47-55).

14. In regards to claims 13 and 14, Martin discloses the method, wherein the third telephone call providing the area party line indication for the first local call station comprises the third telephone call dialing an area code and an exchange identifying the first local call station, and dialing a four digit area party line indicator (See col. 1-2 lines 61-3).

15. In regards to claim 16, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: after bridging the third telephone call with the first and second telephone calls to further establish the area party line, receiving a selection from the first telephone call and the second telephone call to enter a private forum; removing the first telephone call and the second telephone call from the area party line upon receiving the selection to enter the private forum; and establishing a connection between the first telephone call and the second telephone call separate from the area party line after removing the first telephone call and the second telephone call from the area party line (See col. 2 lines 23-35, col. 5 lines 5-13, and col. 5-6 lines 48-5).

16. In regards to claim 17, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: after establishing the connection between the first and second telephone calls separate from the area party line, receiving a selection from the first telephone call and the second telephone call to exit the private forum; ending the connection between the first telephone call and the second telephone call separate from the area party line upon receiving the selection to exit the private forum; and bridging the first telephone call the second telephone call with the third telephone call to add the first telephone call and the second telephone call to the area party line after ending the connection between the



first telephone call and the second telephone call (See col. 2 lines 23-35, col. 5 lines 5-13, and col. 5-6 lines 48-5).

17. In regards to claims 18 and 29, Martin discloses a method for creating area party lines (e.g., chat rooms) (See Abstract), comprising: receiving a first telephone call at a first local station directly over a first telecommunication link, the first telephone call providing an area party line indication (e.g., the caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW); receiving a second telephone call at a second local call station over a second telecommunication link, the second telephone call providing the area party line indication (e.g., another caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW) for the first local call station; transferring the second telephone call from the second local call station to the first local call station based on the area party line indication of the second telephone call; receiving the second telephone call transferred from the second local call station at the first local call station; and bridging the second telephone call with the first telephone call at the first local call station to establish a first area party line (e.g., Pop Music chat room) between the first telephone call and the second telephone call, wherein the first local call station is configured to accommodate further bridging of calls received subsequent to the first telephone call and the second telephone call to the area party line established between the first telephone call and second telephone call (See col. 1-2 lines 61-11 and col. 4 lines 25-46); receiving a reassignment indication from a caller (e.g., the caller presses one or more buttons, such as "1", on the keypad to enter a different chat room) in the first area party line; in response to receiving the reassignment indication from the caller in the first area party line, bridging the caller from the first area

party line to a second area party line (e.g., Rock Music chat room) (See col. 4 lines 47-55 and Claim 18).

18. In regards to claim 34, Martin discloses the telecommunications switching point, wherein the telecommunications links are landlines (See Fig. 1 and col. 3 lines 29-33).

19. In regards to claim 35, Martin discloses the telecommunications switching point, wherein the telecommunications links are wireless (See Fig. 1, col. 3 lines 23-28, and col. 3 lines 30-33).

20. In regards to claim 37, Martin discloses the telecommunications bridging station, wherein the telecommunication switching points of the plurality are identified by unique exchange numbers (See col. 6 lines 45-61).

### ***Response to Arguments***

21. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-37 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

22. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Banks et al. (US Patent Application, Pub. No.: US 2002/0095465 A1) teach method and system for participating in chat sessions. Bansal (US 6,788,949) teaches a method and system for transfer of mobile chat sessions.

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23. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THJUAN K. ADDY whose telephone number is (571)272-7486. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:30-5:00pm.
24. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ahmad Matar can be reached on (571) 272-7488. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.
25. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Thjuan K. Addy/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2614